

# Selecting Literature for Adults

*Ohio Literacy Resource Center*  
**Guidelines for Selecting Literature for Adults**  
developed by The OLRC Reading Group

1. The book should have (or could have) an adult message. It should affect you as a person, not just as a teacher. That is, you should find the content interesting or emotionally satisfying from an adult perspective. Many appropriate books have a timeless quality. Others seem authentic or realistic.
2. The point of view should be appropriate. If the book is written from a child's point of view, it should not seem childish. Reminiscences often provide an appropriate point of view.
3. The book should provide an opportunity for discussion and/ or instruction. For example, it might fit into content area study or become a part of a thematic unit. Or it might stimulate memories, serve as a prompt for writing, or raise issues for discussion that adults would find interesting.
4. Book length should be appropriate for adult learners.
5. Sentence structure should seem natural. It should be neither too difficult nor too "babyish."
6. Presentation and format should be appropriate. For example, the illustrations should not seem childish. The visual layout should not be too "busy."

**NOTE:** We worked at selecting books for more than a year before we created this list of guidelines. The guidelines represent our attempt to articulate the criteria we use in judging children's literature or young adult literature appropriate for use in adult literacy programs.